



MEMO

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To: Members, Nutrient Criteria Affordability Advisory Group

CC:

From: Bob Bukantis, Head of Water Quality Standards Section

Date: 9/4/2008

RE: Purpose, Location, Attachments, and Member Composition of the Nutrient Criteria Affordability Advisory Group

Purpose

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is in the process of developing water quality standards to address pollution caused by nutrient enrichment in Montana's streams, rivers, and lakes. In some cases the new standards will result in very restrictive limits for nutrients in MPDES discharge permits.

Compliance with the proposed numeric nutrient water quality standards may create an economic hardship for some of Montana's cities, towns, and industries. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) allows states to grant temporary variances from compliance with a state-adopted water quality standard based upon a finding of substantial and widespread economic hardship resulting from complying with the standards. Further, Montana state law requires that when the Board of Environmental Review adopts water quality standards they must give consideration to the economics of waste treatment and prevention (§ MCA 75-5-301(2)(a)).

DEQ recognizes the need to both protect water quality and implement the standards fairly, and intends to allow for temporary variances from the nutrient water quality standards based upon EPA's affordability evaluation methodology. However, EPA's affordability evaluation methodology needs to be further refined so that it can be used in Montana. DEQ would like to draw upon a cross section of Montana interests for advice on reasonable thresholds of affordability for wastewater treatment to meet nutrient water quality standards.

The purpose of the Advisory Group is to provide DEQ recommendations on specific aspects of the EPA's affordability evaluation methodology. DEQ will

provide an overview of EPA's affordability evaluation methodology, context as to how it would be used in relation to numeric nutrient water quality standards, and what DEQ has developed thus far. The Advisory Group will then be asked to address specific components that need further refinement for Montana; for example, what is an appropriate threshold of affordability.

Meeting Location and Times

The meetings will be held September 15, October 15, and November 19, 2008. If the Advisory Group's work is completed early, we may not have all three meetings. The meetings will be held in the Old Livestock Building immediately next to the State Capital Building, at 1310 E. Lockey Ave, in room 105. Meetings start at 9:00 am and will go no later than 5:00 pm. A break for lunch (1-1.5 hrs, as the Group prefers) will occur midday.

Attachments

Included with this memo are two documents. I recommend that you read at least one of them prior to the meeting, the one titled "Scoping Evaluation of Economic Impact Assessment Methodologies for Water Quality Standards" (June 2006). The other document is an overview of the varying costs of different wastewater treatment technologies, and will give you a sense of the cost increase associated with meeting stringent nutrient water quality criteria. Both documents will provide you with good background information prior to the start of the meetings.

Member Composition

As of the date of this memo, the following individuals will comprise the Nutrient Criteria Affordability Advisory Group. If membership composition were to change, the Advisory Group will be informed in a subsequent memo. Non-voting members are representatives of DEQ whose purpose is to provide technical and policy information to the voting members of the Advisory Group.

MEETING ABITRATOR

Gerald H. Mueller
440 Evans Ave.
Missoula, MT 59801

VOTING MEMBERS

Tim Burton, City Manager
City of Helena
316 N. Park Ave. Rm. 331
Helena, MT 59623

John Wilson, Public Works Director
Town of Whitefish
418 2nd St. East
Whitefish, MT 59937

Dick Hoehne, Public Works Director
Town of Philipsburg
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Philipsburg, MT 59858-0339

Earl Salley, WPCAC
1104 19th St. South
Great Falls, MT 59405

Jim Jensen, MEIC
107 W. Lawrence St. #n-10
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Don Allen, WETA
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Brianna Randall, Clark Fork Coalition
140 S. 4th St. West
Missoula, MT 59801

Jim Edgcomb, Regulator of Affordability (WSACT2)
301 S. Park
Helena, MT. 59601

Scott Murphy, Wastewater Engineer, Morrison-Maierle Inc.
1 Engineering Pl
Helena, MT 59602

Dave Aune, Wastewater Engineer, Great West Engineering
2501 Belt View Drive
Helena, MT 59604

Dude Tyler, Real Estate/Developer
418 S Yellowstone St
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NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Todd Teegarden, Bureau Chief
Technical & Financial Assistance Bureau
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1520 E. 6th Ave
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Jeff Blend, Ph.D., Economist and Energy Analyst
Energy and Pollution Prevention Bureau
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